



Organizing Guide: How to run a Give it up for the Earth! event

Thank you for organizing a **Give it up for the Earth!** event.

Give it up for the Earth! is a national faith-in-action campaign to increase Canada's contribution to climate justice. It offers people an opportunity to be part of the solution to the global climate crisis.

Give it up for the Earth! events will be held between February 14 and March 29, 2018. These dates correspond with the Christian season of Lent, but everyone is invited to participate. Events will be hosted by churches, schools, and community groups – we encourage you to engage the broader community as much as possible.

Give it up for the Earth! expands the conversation about climate change. By highlighting our individual and societal connections to rising greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and identifying both personal and policy actions, **Give it up for the Earth!** offers an accessible, tangible, and powerful way to respond to this critical issue.

Give it up for the Earth! will signal to the government that Canadians – especially Canadian Christians – are prepared to make lifestyle changes to reduce our GHG emissions. And, that we want our government to match and exceed these actions with policy changes that will move us further and faster towards international climate change goals. In 2018, we are specifically calling on the federal government to end all subsidies to the fossil fuel sector right away.

Building on a successful inaugural campaign in 2017, we are pleased to now be running **Give it up for the Earth!** as an annual campaign.

Designing your Give it up for the Earth! event

The aims of **Give it up for the Earth!** are **(1)** to raise awareness about climate change, and **(2)** to collect signatures as a demonstration of support for increased federal government action.

How you do this is up to you. Listed below are some options that fall into three categories of events: captive audience, community outreach, and online. You can choose one, do a combination, or come up with something else altogether (if you do the latter, we really want to hear about it!).

1. Captive audience events

- a. Incorporate **Give it up for the Earth!** into Sunday worship. Focus on creation care as the worship theme. CPJ sermon starters, sample prayers, and hymn suggestions – available at www.cpj.ca/climate – can get you started. Distribute postcards with the bulletin at the beginning of the service, then invite people to submit them as part of their offering.
- b. Highlight **Give it up for the Earth!** at coffee hour or during Shrove Tuesday dinner. Make a brief announcement to introduce **Give it up for the Earth!**, emphasizing climate change as an issue of faith. Distribute postcards and offer an opportunity for questions and discussion. Set up a table or pass a basket to collect postcards.
- c. Dedicate a Lenten Bible Study or Youth/Adult Sunday School class to creation care. Bible study and other worship resources are available at www.cpj.ca/climate. You can also draw on the backgrounder, “Climate Change as a Matter of Faith and Justice” or “Living Ecological Justice: A Biblical Response to the Ecological Crisis” (www.cpj.ca/lej).

2. Community outreach events

- a. Lunch hour or Saturday community event. Assemble a group of volunteers. Identify a time and location for your event, keeping in mind that you'll want a lot of pedestrian traffic. Meet with volunteers ahead of time to discuss the major points of the **Give it up for the Earth!** campaign. Greet people as they pass by, ask them if they'd be willing to "**Give it up for the Earth!**" and give them a postcard. Possible locations include: downtown intersections, university campuses, or outside political offices.

3. Online events (This may be done independently or to supplement #1 or #2).

Use websites, newsletters, and social media platforms to profile **Give it up for the Earth!**

- a. Post or embed the **Give it up for the Earth!** postcard (www.cpj.ca/pledge) on your faith community website (this can be a congregational or parish site, and/or one shared by the diocese, presbytery, synod, classis or national church).
- b. Alongside the postcard, include a faith and climate article written by CPJ (see www.cpj.ca/eco-justice/news for our most recent posts) or someone in your denomination.
- c. You can set a date and time for your online event, or simply share this page in your electronic newsletter, and on your Facebook, Twitter, and/or Instagram pages throughout Lent (February 14-March 29, 2018). Use the hashtag #GiveItUpForTheEarth.
- d. Encourage people to participate in **Give it up for the Earth!**

Planning your Give it up for the Earth! event

Organizing a **Give it up for the Earth!** event is straight-forward and fun! This checklist is designed to help you sort out what needs to be done, and when. We've also included a list of materials.

Getting started:

- Choose the style and format of your **Give it up for the Earth!** event.
- Gather a team of volunteers. You can do this by reaching out to your faith community, local environmental organizations and social justice groups. You may also wish to use social media to reach out to your network. Plan to have 3-10 people, depending on the style or your event. Please note that the community outreach-style event requires more volunteers.
- Pick a location and confirm availability. If you're planning an outdoor event, choose a back-up, bad weather location. Make sure that it is central enough for foot traffic during the lunch hour on the day of the event. Check with your municipal government about permit requirements.
- Map out the details of your **Give it up for the Earth!** event using the resources provided – feel free to use your creativity to design an event well suited to your community.

Two weeks before event:

- Confirm with CPJ that you received **all** of your materials. If you have not received all of the materials, or if you think you'll need more, contact Karri as soon as possible (karri@cpj.ca).

- Contact your local media using the guidelines provided below. Customize and distribute the sample press release you received by email.
- Decide if you would like to use banners, signs, or any other visuals at your event. If you do, work with your volunteers to coordinate messages and make a plan to create the placards.

One week before event:

- Confirm the plan for the day of the event with your volunteers: when you will meet, everybody's role (set up, clean up, presenting...), what they should bring (banners, posters, postcards, as well as a water bottle and raincoat, for example), the plan for inclement weather (if necessary), and any other details that you would like to establish.
- Invite your local MP, provincial/territorial representative and/or municipal councillor to be part of the event. They can join you in any style of event. For captive audience events, you may wish to invite them to say a few words, and for community outreach events they can participate in the handing out of postcards on the street.
- Call local media outlets, asking them if they received your press release and inviting them again to your event.
- Sort out any loose ends or final details for your **Give it up for the Earth!** event. Give us a call if you have any last minute questions or concerns. We're happy to help!

The day of the event:

- Send out a final press release to local media on the morning of your event.
- Arrive early at your location to set up. Bring your **Give it up for the Earth!** materials!
- Review the event plan and key talking points with your volunteers.
- Greet everyone you meet with a smile. Share your enthusiasm for **Give it up for the Earth!** Let everybody know that events like this are taking place across Canada throughout Lent.
- Take pictures of the event as it unfolds and send them to CPJ via social media or email (www.facebook.com/citizensforpublicjustice, [@publicjustice](https://twitter.com/publicjustice), brad@cpj.ca). Use the hashtag #GiveItUpForTheEarth. This will allow us to showcase the efforts of volunteers across Canada.
- If you invited local media, make sure that you have a designated location for them to film or interview you and your volunteers.
- Try to engage as many people as you can! Not everyone will be willing to chat, but the ones who do will be interested in what you have to say. Regardless of their reactions, a smile and encouraging tone from you will make a big difference!
- Remember to thank your volunteers for their time and efforts to promote climate justice!

After the event:

- Send out the follow-up media advisory to your local media (provided to you by CPJ via email).
- If your MP was unable to attend your event, visit them afterwards, invite them to sign the postcard, have a conversation about your climate concerns, and let them know about all of the **Give it up for the Earth!** events taking place across the country (see cpj.ca/for-the-earth).
- Return your signed postcards to CPJ by Thursday, April 18. **Give it up for the Earth!** postcards are pre-addressed and postage paid, however if you are able to collect and return signed postcards to CPJ in bulk, that will reduce our expenses and allow us to do more great work!
- Provide CPJ with feedback about your event experience – what worked well, what needs improvement and any suggestions you have for future events – using the online survey (a link will be emailed to you soon).

A few additional notes for your Give it up for the Earth! event

Engaging with the media

One way to increase our impact is to engage the media in your community. Calling your local newspaper or TV station a couple of days before, and the morning of your local event will greatly increase your chances of making a splash. Remember that reporters have a lot of interesting stories pitched to them every day, so remember to bring your energy when you talk to them.

To make it easier for you, we have created a press release that you can update with your own information and then send to local media (you might need to do some research for contacts and how to “pitch” a story). Some reporters will want just the press release, but others will want to talk to you on the phone first. Don’t be nervous, you can do it! You are an amazing volunteer!

Give it up for the Earth! materials

We know that we’re using a lot of paper for this environmental campaign and we want to assure you that we’ve done our best to minimize resource impact. The **Give it up for the Earth!** postcards were printed by a local carbon neutral printhouse using FSC certified recycled paper and soya inks.

Give it up for the Earth! event support

Climate change is a serious global issue, and we take it very seriously (just like you). Still, we want you to have fun, while engaging new friends and supporters to our common cause!

And remember, **we are here to help!** If you have questions before, after, or during your **Give it up for the Earth!** event, please reach out.

Karri, 613-232-0275 ext. 223, karri@cpj.ca

Thank you for all your work to **Give it up for the Earth!**

*Karri & the entire team at
Citizens for Public Justice!*

